

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/781,800

Examiner

Ruth C. Rodriguez

Applicant(s)

OCHIAI ET AL.

Art Unit

3677

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to communication filed on 24 April 2007.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-3 and 5-9.
3. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☐ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____

REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

Maughan (US 6,164,861) discloses a cover comprises a cover body, a tubular grommet and a projection. The cover body is hard and is formed as a plate shape. The body comprises opposite surfaces and a socket protruding partially from one of the opposite surfaces. The socket has an inner peripheral surface. The grommet is held in the socket. The grommet is deformable elastically and is formed of a compressible material. The grommet comprises a fitting hole and an outer peripheral surface. The fitting hole has an inner peripheral surface. The projection projects from an installation member to which the cover is installed. The projection comprises a head, a neck having a diameter smaller than that of the head and an outer peripheral surface. The projection is fitted into the fitting hole of the grommet whereby holding the cover body detachably to the installation member. A diameter of the head of the projection is smaller than a diameter of the socket at a portion of the socket opposite that protruding from one of the opposite surfaces of the cover body. The head of the projection may be introduced to the socket from a side of the socket opposite to the cover body. The grommet further comprises a plurality of convexities disposed on at least one of the outer peripheral surface and the inner peripheral surface of the fitting hole protruding towards tips thereof in radial directions of the grommet and contacting with at least one of the inner peripheral surface of the socket and the outer peripheral surface of the projection. The convexities are formed as a substantially triangular cross-sectional shaped whose thickness reduces from

large to small from the bases to the tips thereof. The convexities are compressed in the radial direction of the grommet and elastically contact the socket or the projection when the convexities are pressed to an inner peripheral surface of the socket and an outer peripheral surface of the projection. The socket has an inwardly extending flange and the grommet is completely disposed within the socket and retained by the flange.

Maughan fails to disclose that the tubular grommet has an annular groove and the flange hold the grommet by being fitted within the annular groove where the grommet is elastically deformed.

Accordingly, it would not have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have an annular groove provided in the tubular member so that the flange holds the grommet by being fitted within the annular groove and the grommet is deformable elastically since Maughan discloses that the grommet is completely disposed within the socket and the flange keeps the grommet within the socket by engaging an end of the grommet and therefore the flange can not engage an annular groove.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ruth C. Rodriguez whose telephone number is (571) 272-7070. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 07:15 - 15:45. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, J.J. Swann can be reached on (571) 272-7075. Submissions of your responses by facsimile transmission are encouraged. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (571) 273-8300. Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (571) 272-6640. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

/RCR/
Ruth C. Rodriguez
Patent Examiner
Art Unit 3677

/James R. Brittain/
Primary Examiner Art Unit 3677

rcr
July 9, 2007